

## Message Text

SECRET

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44

ORIGIN SNM-02

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO

S E C R E T STATE 220275

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, EC

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: COUNTRY PROBLEM ASSESSMENT PAPERS

1. THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF A PAPER DESCRIBING NARCOTICS PROBLEM IN YOUR COUNTRY AS IT RELATES TO UNITED STATES DRUG SCENE. TREAT THIS AS SECRET-NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION. THIS IS AN INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT WHICH HAS JUST BEEN PREPARED IN CONNECTION WITH FY 1976 PROGRAM REVIEWS. ANY COMMENTS, CORRECTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS ARISING FROM MISSION NARCOTICS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THIS PAPER SHOULD BE SENT TO DEPARTMENT BY CABLE. EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE AT MEXICO CITY REGIONAL NARCOTICS CONFERENCE MAY ALSO WISH DISCUSS THIS ASSESSMENT PAPER WITH WASHINGTON REPS THERE.

2. BEGIN TEXT: SIGNIFICANCE: AMONG SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES, ECUADOR IS A LEADING SOURCE OF HEROIN AND COCAINE FOR EXPORT TO THE US. ECUADOREAN COCAINE IS CONSIDERED BY TRAFFICKERS TO BE THE BEST PRODUCED IN THE ANDEAN REGION. COCA LEAVES ARE OBTAINED IN THE COUNTRY ITSELF AND FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. SOME OF THE RAW OPIUM USED IN ECUADOREAN HEROIN PRODUCTION IS PRODUCED  
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LOCALLY AND SOME REPORTEDLY IN PERU AND COLOMBIA. SOME HEROIN IS ALSO OBTAINED FROM EUROPE IN EXCHANGE FOR COCAINE.

PROBLEM: TRAFFICKERS OPERATE WITH NEAR IMPUNITY. COCAINE SEIZURES IN 1973, ALTHOUGH DOUBLE THE 1972 SEIZURES, CAME TO ONLY 62.5 KILOGRAMS. AN UNKNOWN, BUT LARGE AMOUNT, ESCAPES SEIZURE. NO HEROIN WAS SEIZED BY ECUADOREAN AUTHORITIES IN 1973.

ALTHOUGH APPEARING INCREASINGLY WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH US OFFICIALS, THE ECUADOREANS HAVE NOT YET UNDERTAKEN A SUSTAINED, ORGANIZED EFFORT AGAINST THE TRAFFICKERS. THE BASIC INHIBITING FACTOR IS OFFICIAL CORRUPTION, BUT THERE ARE OTHERS, SUCH AS THE TRADITION OF SMUGGLING IN THE GUAYAQUIL AREA, AND THE FACT THAT MANY PEOPLE IN THE AREA DEPEND ON COCA AS A CASH CROP. POOR PLANNING, ORGANIZATION, AND INADEQUATE USE OF PERSONNEL SEVERELY HINDER THE EFFORTS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE.

ASSESSMENT: THE ARREST AND CONTINUED CUSTODY OF BIG-TIME TRAFFICKER FRANCISCO ADUM ADUM LAST APRIL IS A GOOD SIGN. SEVERAL OTHER ARRESTS AND SEIZURES HAVE BEEN MADE IN RECENT MONTHS. MANY OTHER IMPORTANT TRAFFICKERS REMAIN AT LARGE, HOWEVER. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT PROGRESS IN THE NARCOTICS FRONT WILL BE MADE ONLY BE REVAMPING THE POLICE FORCE. SUCH A REORGANIZATION IS PLANNED, BUT THIS IS LIKELY TO BE A SLOW PROCESS. EVEN WITH ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS, NARCOTICS PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE AND POSSIBLY INCREASE GIVEN THE EXISTING CORRUPTION, AVAILABILITY OF THE RAW PRODUCT, AND THE STRENGTH OF DRUG NETWORKS. END TEXT. KISSINGER

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NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

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